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TAGS: OPRC KMDR KPAO
SUBJECT: MEDIA RECTION: AFGHAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

TOPIC: Afghan presidential election

HEADLINES AND EXCERPTS:

"The success and failure of Afghan elections will influence U.S. strategy"

The pro-PRC Chinese-language Macau Daily News remarked in an editorial (8/25): "...Afghan elections pose a big test to the U.S.'s Afghanistan policy. After taking office, U.S. President Obama has shifted his strategic focus from Iraq to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Obama delivered a speech at the White House on August 20, congratulating Afghanistan on successful elections. On August 21, he also praised the Afghan elections as a 'major step' for Afghans who strive to master their country's future. Obama praised Afghan voters for showing courage in the face of the Taliban's threat. He hoped that the elections will rightly show Afghans' will. Although the U.S. administration has avoided commenting on the Afghan presidential election candidates, there is no doubt that the U.S. hopes the next Afghan government can cooperate better with the U.S.... Obama's strategy is to gradually reduce the number of U.S. troops and NATO allied forces in Afghanistan by the end of next year and shift the responsibility of security to Afghan troops. Hence, it is important for the situation to take a better turn in the coming year in order to start many reconstruction projects. Political stability is a must for reconstruction projects and a legitimate government will bring about political stability. Thus, the success of the presidential election will increase the legitimacy of the government, which is closely related to the success and failure of Obama's Afghan strategy."

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